

Chalfonte Hotel  
Pacific and North Carolina Avenues  
Atlantic City  
Atlantic County  
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-869

HABS  
NJ,  
1-ATCI,  
4-

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PHOTOCOPIES  
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

INDEX TO PHOTOGRAPHS  
HABS No. NJ-869  
(Page 6)

NJ-869-82      PHOTOCOPY OF DRAWING OF BATH ROOM RENOVATIONS IN C BUILDING.  
ADDISON HUTTON COLLECTION

NJ-869-83      PHOTOCOPY OF POSTCARD, CA. 1920.    ADDISON HUTTON COLLECTION

NJ-869-84      PHOTOCOPY OF POSTCARD, LOBBY VIEW, CA. 1924.    ADDISON HUTTON  
COLLECTION

NJ-869-85      PHOTOCOPY OF POSTCARD, BOARDWALK ENTRANCE CORRIDOR, CA. 1924.  
ADDISON HUTTON COLLECTION

NJ-869-86      PHOTOCOPY OF POSTCARD, VIEW FROM LOBBY, CA. 1924.    ADDISON  
HUTTON COLLECTION

NJ-869-87      PHOTOCOPY OF PHOTOGRAPH OF CONSTRUCTION VIEW OF NEW POWER PLANT,  
1928.    ADDISON HUTTON COLLECTION

NJ-869-88      PHOTOCOPY OF PHOTOGRAPH OF CONSTRUCTION VIEW OF NEW POWER PLANT,  
1928.    ADDISON HUTTON COLLECTION

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. NJ-869

## CHALFONTE HOTEL

Location: Pacific and North Carolina Avenues  
Atlantic City, Atlantic County, New Jersey.

Present Owner: Harrah's-Holiday Inns of New Jersey, Inc.  
Occupant: Demolished.

Significance: Built in 1868, this building has been altered, expanded, and even moved closer to the sea. As a vacation resort, the Chalfonte witnessed the growth of the Atlantic City area, itself responding to the need to grow in order to keep up with the popularity of the resort area.

## ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Elisha and Elizabeth Roberts opened The Chalfonte Hotel—or Chalfonte House as it was first called—on June 25, 1868 near the corner of Pacific and North Carolina Avenues in Atlantic City. This intersection, its place in Atlantic City's street plan, and the geographical relation of the city to the state of New Jersey are shown in (sheet #2). The Roberts' choice of this corner was no doubt determined by its proximity to the train depot to the north and the ocean to the south. Because the tides were continually increasing the beach area, the Roberts found it possible to move the hotel forward twice—once in 1879 and again in 1889. They also extended their main building and added subsidiary structures to it. These successive changes are shown on the Chronological Location Map (sheet #3). The Chalfonte passed through a period of transition in management during the eightennineties and came under the control of Henry W. Leeds around 1900. Leeds embarked on a major expansion program and in 1904 constructed Atlantic City's first tall, iron frame hotel. It is this structure that people usually mean today when they recall staying at the Chalfonte. The original structure, however, was not demolished. As a comparison of the 1903 site plan (sheet #4) with the 1904 site plan (sheet #5) shows, it was simply moved sixty feet to the west, re-clad in brick, and integrated into the larger hotel complex. The history of the Chalfonte, therefore, is primarily a study in continuities.

Atlantic City is the creation of the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>1</sup> It was the result of steadily increasing urbanization with its inevitable need for some place where the masses could escape from work and city streets to leisure, romance, and sea breezes. Those with time enough and money could go to Cape May, where well-to-do Philadelphians mingled with their counterparts from southern states. Even the well-to-do, however, may have found the long journey an inconvenience, while those whose workweek ended on Saturday afternoon and started again on Monday morning simply had no means of escape from their sweltering row houses.

Atlantic City changed that. It was the creation of a group of nineteenth century capitalists who saw an opportunity for enterprise and profit. Led by Richard Osborne, an engineer who had seen the boom towns of the midwest, and by Dr. Jonathan Pitney, a long time resident of nearby Absecon village with the requisite political connections, the group secured a charter from the New Jersey legislature to build a railroad across the flat land of central New Jersey. Their Camden and Atlantic Railroad then set about buying up the available land on Absecon Island. When the legislature, fearing a monopoly, forbade further land purchases by the railroad, the same men organized The Camden and Atlantic Land Company. In 1854 the men who had built the railroad and bought the land built the Surf House. The hotel increased patronage for the railroad and the growing crowds attracted more hotels and boarding houses, thus swelling the price of land. To this well thought out scheme Osborne added a flair for public relations. With a stroke worthy of Barnum, he christened his deserted strip of sand Atlantic City and named its principal streets after the oceans of the world and the states of the nation.

It would be some years before the actual Atlantic City began to match the promoter's vision. There was a spurt of hotel building in the 1850s, as the Surf House was joined by the United States, Schauffler's, Congress Hall, and others.<sup>2</sup> The Civil War brought a temporary halt to the resort town's growth, but in the late sixties things picked up again. In 1868 Alexander H. Boardman began his popular excursions from Philadelphia to Atlantic City. On June 25 of the same year Elisha and Elizabeth Roberts opened Chalfonte House.

The Roberts were Quakers, a religious association that has remained a part of the hotel's tradition to this day. Their family history is given in an unpublished memoir<sup>3</sup> which, though unsigned, is clearly written by one of their children. It records that from 1864 to 1868 the Roberts managed 600 acres and the Farm House at Westtown School in Chester County. This was a major boarding school for Quakers and it was at the Farm House that parents stayed while visiting their children. After three years, Elisha asked for a raise in salary and when the committee refused, he began seeking other opportunities. As the memoir explains:

Father had made one or two short visits to Atlantic City in 1866 and 1867, stopping at the "Clarendon House" on Virginia Avenue near Pacific. Being impressed with the rather indifferent food and very hard uncomfortable beds, he thought a good boarding house with plenty of good food and comfortable beds would have a good chance of success. The more he thought about it the more convinced he was. A few interested friends were willing to loan him money on the venture, but many thought him foolish and that it would be very risky,

On January 30, 1868 the land was purchased for \$6,500 from John DaCosta\* (who had bought it in 1856 from The Camden and Atlantic Land Company) and the Chalfonte was constructed that winter at a cost of \$21,000. The Roberts planned to open on June 25, 1868 and on June 22 the following advertisement appeared in The Philadelphia Inquirer.

\*A chain of title is provided at the end of this report.

Chalfonte, Atlantic City, N.J.--This new commodious and first class boarding house will be ready for guests 6th month 25th. It is beautifully situated on NORTH CAROLINA Avenue in full view of the ocean. Elisha Robert, Proprietor.

As often happens, the hotel was not quite ready on the scheduled day and on the morning of June 25th the dining room was still filled with carpenter's benches and its floor littered with wood shavings. "Several days before all was completed," the author of the family memoir recalls, "a few guests arrived and insisted on staying and putting up with many necessary inconveniences."

It was not uncommon for hotels to attract a clientele by appealing to a particular religion, ethnic, or geographical group. Thus Schauffler's attracted German Americans, The Chester County Hotel presumably appealed to visitors from the West Chester area, and Haddon House drew visitors from Haddonfield, New Jersey. The Roberts emphasized their Quaker connections. The hotel was named after Chalfont-St-Giles, a small town in Buckinghamshire that had played an important role in Quaker history and where William Penn is buried. A note that appeared in the June 30, 1868 issue of The Philadelphia Inquirer stressed the connection of the Roberts with one of the Delaware Valley's most important Quaker institutions:

Chalfonte is the name given to one of the new hotels built since last season. It is handsomely located near the ocean on North Carolina Avenue, and is a large and commanding structure, three stories in height, and will be kept by Elisha Roberts, long known in connection with the West Town Boarding School near West Chester, Pa.

The tradition of Quaker management continued when the hotel came under the control of the Leeds Company in 1900.

The Chalfonte was a success from the start:

Running a house to accomodate 140 guests brought many new cares and responsibilities to Father and Mother to which they were unaccustomed, but their original determination to provide good food and plenty of it, comfortable beds and a home like atmosphere about the whole place, brought them reward, the first summer proving to be a financial success. Running a large boarding house meant an entirely new life for Father and Mother. When there was good help all went well, but often it was the reverse, when Mother would have to be pastry cook and make pies and deserts for the household.

The family involvement must have created an atmosphere attractive to guests. A similar situation prevailed at the Haddon House, founded across North Carolina Avenue in 1869 by Samuel and Susanna Hunt.

Another factor which contributed to the Chalfonte's success was its location near the beach. The first hotels built in Atlantic City were clustered around the railroad station. The Chalfonte was located conveniently near the station but it was decidedly

closer to the ocean than the first generation of Atlantic City hotels. The beach, which was one of Atlantic City's great attractions, was also one of its early headaches. Glaring to the eye and hot to the foot, the soft sand made walking difficult and tiresome. Absecon Island was dotted by huge sandhills (in 1868 one stood directly across the street from the Chalfonte) and there were troublesome pools of stagnant water offering breeding spots for mosquitoes. The early beach at Atlantic City more nearly resembled a wilderness seashore than the level stretch of sand we know today.

The eighteen-seventies and eighties saw the gradual evolution of three ways of coping with the transition from street to beach. The first was the bathhouse. At first there were no bathhouses at all; the beach was for strolling and for dances at low tide, but not for swimming. Then crude wooden structures began to appear, permitting visitors to change into a swim suit. These were set up in a higgledy-piggledy fashion, for exclusive rights down to the high-water line were not yet observed. In the eighteen-eighties this situation changed. On the one hand large business such as George F. Lee's Park Bath House, two stories tall with 116 dressing rooms, brought new order and respectability to some areas while in others, such as the area in front of the Chalfonte, the beach was made more exclusive by restricting the use of bathhouses to guests of the hotel.

The second way of easing the transition between hotel and ocean was by improving access to the beach. This was made all the more necessary by the fact that the tides were continually depositing sand and thus increasing the distance to be traversed. The Roberts family could cope with this situation either by moving the hotel closer to the beach or by providing a convenient means of transportation.

As Chalfonte was some \_\_\_\_\_ [the space is blank in the memoir] feet from the beach, in 1873 (?) father decided to build a railroad from the house to the beach, and "The A.C. Central Railroad Co." came into being. A track with wooden rails was laid and a nice little car drawn by a red mule conveyed the guests who cared to ride at 5¢ per, to and from the beach. The wood rails were afterward replaced with light iron tee rails, and a good looking bay horse took the place of the mule, with a portly colored man as driver and conductor.

The little road was opened till the house was moved nearer the sea in 1879.

The question mark following the date 1873 is in the original text. In fact newspaper advertisements in The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin and the Philadelphia Inquirer show that it was in 1870 that the Chalfonte was able to advertise "Railway to the beach." The Haddon House across the street made the same promise and presumably shared the railway. Although the memoir mentions a five cent charge, an 1880 advertisement in The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin promises that "Chalfonte car runs free to guests of the hotel"

The major factor, however, in transforming the relation of the hotels to the beach was the evolution of the boardwalk from its very flimsy beginnings to the major thoroughfare we know today. The first boardwalk dates from 1870, two years after the Chalfonte opened. It was proposed by Alexander Boardman, who is said to have

been annoyed by the amount of sand tracked back into his railroad excursion cars. It was ten feet wide, constructed of wood planks, and laid directly on the sand. Made in sections, it could be moved inland every fall and stacked in piles for the winter. The boardwalk proved instantly popular and by 1880 a second one was built, this one fourteen feet wide and raised on piles. The boardwalk transformed the relation of the hotels to the sea. In effect, it created a third, intermediate environment. By 1883, the first business directory of Atlantic City listed nearly one hundred stores and restaurants located on the boardwalk and the number grew with each passing year. The boardwalk was badly damaged in the hurricane of 1889 and on January 2, 1890, Elisha Roberts deeded to Atlantic City a sixty foot strip of land for a new boardwalk.

By the eighteen-eighties Atlantic City was clearly a success. It had not yet vanquished Cape May as the major resort of the New Jersey coast, but it was agreed that Atlantic City was larger and more bustling. In a novel—really a fictionalized series of travel articles which appeared in Harper's New Monthly Magazine in 1886,—by Charles Dudley Warner, a Mr. Stanhope King explains the difference between the two resorts:

"It (Cape May) seems a refined sort of Place in its outlines and quietly respectable. They tell me here that they don't want the excursion crowds that overrun Atlantic City, but an Atlantic City man, whom I met at the pier, said that Cape May used to be the boss, but that Atlantic City had got the bulge on it now—had thousands to the hundreds here. To get the bulge seems a desirable thing in America ... and I think we'd better see what a place is like that is popular, whether fashion recognizes it or not."<sup>4</sup>

With those words Stanhope and his friend, the artist Graham Forbes, set out by rail through the Jersey sands to visit this wondrous new creation. Seeing it is an experience they cannot do without. After all, their distinguished friend Mrs. Corlandt has assured them that "Atlantic City is an important place; a great many of its inhabitants spend their winters in Philadelphia."<sup>5</sup>

Stanhope and his friend are engaging in an activity much like slumming; they are seeing how the middle and lower middle classes live. Their reactions would have seemed haughty and perhaps offensive to Elisha and Elizabeth Roberts, but they will be quoted here not only because they are informative but because a certain defensiveness in the face of highbrow standards was to the effect the architectural form of the 1904 Chalfonte. A railway journey through the New Jersey sands brings them to the city by the sea:

And a city it is. If many houses, endless avenues, sand, paint make a city, the artist confessed that this was one. Everything is on a large scale. It covers a large territory, the streets run at right angles, the avenues to the ocean take the names of the States. If the town had been made to order and sawed out by one man, it could not be more beautifully regular and more satisfactorily monotonous. There is nothing about it to give the most commonplace mind in the world a throb of disturbance. The hotels,

the cheap shops, the cottages, are all of wood, and, with three or four exceptions in the thousands, they are practically alike, all ornamented with scroll-work, as if cut out by the jig-saw, all vividly painted, all appealing to a primitive taste just awakening to the appreciation of the gaudy chromo and the illuminated and consoling household motto. Most of the hotels are in the town at considerable distance from the ocean, and the majestic old sea, which can be monotonous but never vulgar, is barricaded from the town by five or six miles of stark-naked plank walk, rows on rows of bath closets, leagues of flimsy carpentry-work, in the way of cheap john shops, tyn-type booths, peep-shows, go-rounds, shooting galleries, pop-beer and cigar shops, restaurants, barber shops, photographs galleries, summer theatres. Sometimes the plank walk runs for a mile or two, on its piles, between rows of these shops and booths, and again it drops off down by the waves. Here and there is a gayly painted wooden canopy by the shore, with chairs where idlers can sit and watch the frolicking in the water, or a space railed off, where the select of the hotels lie or lounge in the sand under red umbrellas. The calculating mind wonders how many million feet of lumber there are in this unpicturesque barricade, and what gigantic forests have fallen to make this timber front to the sea.<sup>6</sup>

A highbrow attitude provides a certain protection against Atlantic City's clamorous appeal, but finally the narrator's defenses simply collapse. "What will you have?" he at last exclaims. "Shall vulgarity be left just vulgar, and have no apotheosis and glorification? This is very fine of its kind, and a resort for the million. The million come here to enjoy themselves. Would you have an art gallery here, and high-priced New York and Paris shops lining the way?"

Architecturally, Atlantic City was a town of wood frame buildings, painted in bright colors and decorated with an astonishing variety of scroll work. As a more sympathetic viewer than Warner put it:

The architecture is varied and beautiful. There are nearly five-thousand structures, and it is difficult to find two alike; and where two are alike in contour they differ in coloring. Nearly all the buildings are frame, which affords the widest scope for architects and painters.<sup>8</sup>

The buildings were also low to the ground. As an 1873 article in Lippincott's Magazine described it, Atlantic City hotels "have a low, brooking look, and evidently belong to a class of sybarites who are not fond of staircases."<sup>9</sup>

A stereopticon slide shows the Chalfonte as it probably appeared when it was first erected near the corner of Pacific and North Carolina Avenues. An unknown hand has added the date 1878 to it in pen and this seems consistent with all other evidence. The slide (photocopy #36) shows a three story, wood framed



structure with a long sun gallery on the first floor and another on the ocean side of the second floor. There is a hipped roof with a long balustrade. French windows open out onto the sun porch on the first floor and it is possible to make out a stairway from the porch to the ground on the left side of the building. It was characteristic of the Chalfonte from the beginning that entrances were on the side rather than on the front facing the ocean.

The second photograph (photocopy #35) shows the same building from a different angle. This photograph is undated but the only significant difference from the stereoptican slide is that the decorative wood work on the porches has been altered. Perhaps some of the original decoration had been damaged by a storm. This photograph shows the entrance on the North Carolina Avenue side where carriages deposited guests and the small shack in front which marked the beginning of the little railway that ran to the water.

The eighteen-eighties were a decade of improvement for both Atlantic City in general and for the Chalfonte in particular. As The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin put it on Tuesday, July 17, 1883:

It has taken but a decade to remove the few ill-adapted hotels and the great ridges of sand that made it toilsome to reach them, and to create the clear, closely knit thoroughfare which the town council regulates with much nicety.

One of the most significant improvements for both town and hotel came when the state attempted to settle the vexed question of riparian rights to the beach. Early use of the seashore appears to have been very casual indeed. The 1868 Chalfonte seems to have extended over the boundary of Elisha Roberts' land onto the beach area and it was the early custom for hotels to set up their bath houses wherever they thought convenient. As the focus of prosperity shifted from the hotels around the railroad station to those fronting the beach, this situation clearly needed to be formalized. The matter was complicated by the fact that the beach was continually being built up. Although such hotels as the Chalfonte were convenient to the highwater mark in 1868, they were not nearly so close ten years later. As a result, the state stepped in.

On November 15, 1879, the State of New Jersey, through its Riparian Commissioners, deeded to Elisha Roberts all that property which had accumulated in front of his original property boundary. That did not entirely settle matters, as Frank Butler explains it in his Book of the Boardwalk:

. . . when the beach line was only 320' below Pacific Avenue, at N. Carolina, Thomas Mills bought a plot fronting 150' on Pacific at that point to the storm tide mark. On Wednesday, September 8, 1880, the Camden and Atlantic Land Co. brought suit in ejectment against Edwin Lippincott, who then owned the Mills tract, claiming this accretion from the stormtide mark which by that time had receded about 1200 feet due to jetty building, The Land Co. brought suit in ejectment against Edwin

lost its case, but appealed, and to save further litigation, Lippincott, Elisha Roberts of the Chalfonte, Charles Evans of the Seaside, and John F. Starr paid the company \$15,000 in settlement of all claims. On this accretion now stand the Chalfonte-Haddon Hall and Seaside Hotels, and numerous other properties worth many millions.<sup>10</sup>

The immediate result for Elisha Roberts was that in May 1880 his running advertisement in The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin could proclaim; "New Location. 450 feet nearer the beach. Enlarged and Refurnished. Now Open." The 1881 advertisement states that the Chalfonte, in its new location, was two hundred feet from the beach.

A survey of the Chalfonte's advertisements in Philadelphia papers shows two developments. One is that for a number of years the Roberts family seems to have dropped out of active management of the hotel. The 1882 advertisement is signed by S.K. Marshall & Co. in addition to the Roberts and in 1883, and 1884 it is signed by Marshall alone. It was during those years that Elisha Roberts traveled extensively in California; a journal of his trip is to be found in the Quaker Library at Haverford College. In 1885, however, the advertisements are once again signed by Elisha Roberts and Sons.

The advertisements also show that there was a steady process of improvement during these years. The 1881 advertisement mentions "electric bells, new furniture, mattresses, and modern improvements." The 1885 advertisement promises "gas, new furniture, beds, wardrobes, etc." In 1885 the Traymore was able to proclaim that it had "the only modern passenger elevator in Atlantic City," but by 1887 the Chalfonte was advertising "a passenger elevator and other modern improvements." This process of improvement reached a culmination during the winter of 1888-89 when the Chalfonte was moved another four hundred and fifty feet nearer the beach and its complex of buildings was enlarged.

We can study this newest new and improved Chalfonte through two sources. One is a souvenir photograph (photocopy #37). An unknown hand has penciled in the date 1887 beneath the photograph, but the building's proximity to the boardwalk suggests a later date. In addition, the complex of buildings accords with the description in the second source of information on the enlarged Chalfonte—a front page article which appeared on February 18, 1889 in The Atlantic City Daily Union. This newspaper report is especially important in that it describes the interior as well as the exterior of the hotel.

The Daily Union story reports that the hotel has been moved forward four hundred feet and is now only one hundred and fifty feet from the boardwalk. It reports that the building has been raised so that the sun porches are now eleven feet above the grade of the sidewalk. They have been enlarged and there are now two grand staircases leading to them. In addition, the rooms facing the ocean have been extended out by two bays. There is now a ground floor which contains two bays. There is now a ground floor which contains two twenty-five horse power boilers which furnish both power for the elevators and steam heat. The boiler also operates the machinery in the laundry and the pumps for the hot sea water baths.

Atlantic City had attempted during the eighties to establish itself as a winter resort as well as a summer one, and henceforth the Chalfonte was to be an all year hotel.

The Daily Union article reports that all bath houses have been removed from the area in front of the hotel, and that "the pavilion alone remaining will be finished as a separate sun parlor for the use of guests." This pavilion would be the small two story building to the left of the Chalfonte in the photograph. It leads to an annex twenty-five feet from the main building. This annex contained bath houses for guests only on the ground floor and sixteen sleeping rooms above.

The office of the Chalfonte was furnished in walnut and carpeted with "Wilton velvet of pretty designs." It was connected with every room by a series of electric bells. A nearby room contained ice water to satisfy the frequent requests of the guests during summer months. The elevator was said to be "probably the only one operated in this city for a combination of hydraulic power and steam." There was a large kitchen, and adjoining it a carving room fitted up with steam tables. There were pantries, store rooms, pastry rooms, "and other adjuncts usually found in a leading hotel."

The public rooms were very richly decorated. A large parlour fronted the ocean. It was furnished in maroon and dark blue plush and there was a Moquet carpet covering the floor. The windows would have given a fine view of the ocean, for the panes had been replaced with crystal glass, so that a guest could look through "and hardly know whether the sash is open or closed." The view in the other direction may have been equally impressive, for the walls were "decorated with pictures of the beautiful mountainous scenery of California, collected by Mr. Elisha Roberts during the two years in which he travelled extensively through the Golden State and the great west." A ladies' reading and writing room and a gents' smoking and lounging room, "both furnished with admirable taste for the purpose intended," fronted on North Carolina Avenue. The dining room, on the north side of the building, had been enlarged to forty by seventy feet. It was lighted by fourteen windows and heated by five steam radiators. The ceiling, the handiwork of a Mr. Matthews, displayed "artistic finish and harmony of delicate tints rarely equalled." There was a separate dining room for children and nurses.

This newest new and improved Chalfonte contained ninety sleeping apartments, single, double, and en suite. All were furnished in cherry, oak, or maple. The beds featured woven wire springs and hair mattresses. Many had lace curtains. The halls were laid in Brussels carpet and lit by gas.

The 1889 remodelling of the Chalfonte was scarcely finished when a dramatic hurricane hit Atlantic City. Newspaper reports don't mention serious damage to the Roberts' hotel, but the boardwalk was damaged in many places. The town resolved to build a new one, larger and nearer to the water. On January 2, 1890, Elisha Roberts joined other property owners in deeding to Atlantic City a 60 foot wide strip on which a new twenty-four foot wide boardwalk was erected. By moving the boardwalk closer to the water, the city in effect cleared the land on which the 1904 Chalfonte would be erected.

During the eighteen-nineties the Chalfonte went through a series of changes of management which culminated in the dramatic new "million dollar hotel" of 1904. This was built under the leadership of Henry W. Leeds and before its architectural significance can be explained a certain amount of family history is needed.

Leeds was a common name among Atlantic City Quakers and it appears that Henry W. Leeds was not connected with either the "Aunt Millie" Leeds who ran a boarding house for oystermen on Absecon Island in 1838 or with Mrs. Jeremiah Leeds who operated the old Atlantic House at Baltic and Massachusetts. In the course of his research for the New Jersey Writers' Project (WPA), Raymond Ziegler interviewed Henry Leeds' brother Samuel on their family history:

Our Mother, Sarah W. Leeds, entered the hotel business in 1877 at what was then called Ocean Beach, Monmouth County, four miles south of Ocean Grove and Asbury Park, now known as Belmar. Six buildings were taken from the Philadelphia Centennial to Ocean Beach and erected at the lower end of the town. They were used as boarding houses and were known as the Surf, Delaware, Crystal Cottage, Colorado, Atlantic House, and Neptune House. Mrs. Leeds operated the Crystal Cottage from 1877 to 1880 and the Atlantic House until 1885. These houses could accommodate from 50 to 250 guests. In 1885 Mrs. Leeds moved to Sea Girt where she operated the Tremont until 1880, whereafter she joined Henry W. Leeds and J. Haines Lippincott and bought the Haddon Hall in Atlantic City. The purchase was made from the Lippincott family of Medford, who were operating it at that time. Mrs. Leeds supervised the back of the house while Messrs. Leeds and Lippincott with J.P. Peacock as clerk took care of the front office.<sup>11</sup>

Henry W. Leeds and T. Haines Lippincott had formed a close friendship when they attended school together near Riverton, New Jersey. Their partnership lasted without any need for a written agreement until it was at last formalized in 1921.

Henry W. Leeds entered the Chalfonte management by a slightly indirect route. On November 2, 1894 Elisha Roberts, now a widower, sold his property to his sons David and Joseph. Four years later, on February 1, 1898, they in turn sold to Edward Leeds, Sarah Leeds' brother, and Walter Buzby. This partnership broke up almost at once when Buzby purchased the Hotel Dennis and sold his interest in the Chalfonte to Newlin Haines, Edward Leeds and his young nephew Henry W. Leeds. Newlin Haines then moved on to the St. Charles Hotel. Thus by 1900 the Chalfonte was under the management of Henry W. Leeds. The new owners were soon advertising significant improvements in their property. The brief advertisements do not name them, but a comparison of the 1889 photograph (photocopy #37) with the photograph of December 3, 1903 (Photocopy #42) suggests that they included the construction of the K building and the addition of an extra floor, with a plastered cove cornice and a new roof, to the main building. This roof, with its bungalow dormers, is much like that of Haddon Hall across the street. This suggests that Leeds and

and Lippincott were concerned to present a common visual image to match their cooperation in other spheres.

There was, however, one significant difference between the Chalfonte and Haddon Hall between 1900 and 1903. Haddon Hall came right up to the new boardwalk while the Chalfonte had been left behind. Either the Chalfonte would have to be moved forward once again or a new structure would be built on the rather large piece of land that now lay in front of it. It is easy to see why Leeds chose to proceed with a new structure. It is difficult to find words to describe the continuing growth of Atlantic City for its boosters had exhausted the language's supply of superlatives as early as the eighteen-seventies, but a survey of the local press reveals that even the new, enlarged boardwalk was becoming ever more crowded and, more ominously, that the largest hotels were forced to turn away business on the most popular weekends. In addition, there was growing worry about the dangers of fire in a town consisting entirely of wooden structures. A serious fire occurred east of Kentucky Avenue in 1902. Leeds saw the opportunity to build something that Atlantic City had not yet had - an iron frame, fireproof hotel, one with greater splendor and prestige than any of its neighbors. Though it was soon to be followed by the Blenheim, the Traymore, the Chelsea, and others, it was the Chalfonte that initiated Atlantic City's new era of mammoth hotels.

Leeds' choice of an architect was consistent both with his desire for a highly esteemed professional and with the Chalfonte's Quaker tradition. Then in his fifth decade of practice, Addison Hutton was part of the last generation of American architects to be trained in an office rather than in a school of architecture. He had been a draughtsman for the Philadelphia architect Samuel Sloan in the eighteen-fifties and in 1860 he had supervised the building of Sloan's famous mansion "Longwood" in Natchez, Mississippi. During the next half century he designed homes, hospitals, schools, stores, churches, banks, factories, and office buildings. He did not limit himself to a single style of architecture. Instead, he worked in nearly every style that was popular in America during the second half of the nineteenth century. He designed a Mansard roofed building for the West Chester Normal School in 1870 and in the same year created a very scholarly Doric Temple for the Ridgeway Library in Philadelphia. He designed fine Gothic revival buildings for Bryn Mawr College and Lehigh University. Toward the end of his career his attention turned to the Renaissance tradition for the Vail Memorial Library at Lincoln University (1897-98), the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (1902), and the Chalfonte Hotel (1903).

Although Addison Hutton's clients were by no means exclusively Quakers, it is clear from Elizabeth Biddle Yarnall's biography<sup>12</sup> that Quaker connections were central to both his life and his practice. He designed many homes for members of the Society of Friends and he designed buildings for business institutions dominated by Quakers. Among these were the Philadelphia Saving Fund Society (1868), an addition to the J.B. Lippincott book store (1869-70), the Ridgeway Library (1870), the Strawbridge and Clothier store on Market Street (1880-81), the Friends' Library (1885), and another Strawbridge and Clothier store on Filbert Street (1896). He also designed a number of buildings for Quaker educational institutions. Among these were Parish Hall at Swarthmore College (1864-68), the President's house at Swarthmore (1874), Barclay Hall at Haverford College (1875), Taylor and Marion Halls at Bryn Mawr College (1878), the all-purpose building for Westtown School (1884), and the George School in Newtown (1892). This list is all the more

impressive when we recall that during Hutton's career Philadelphia Quakers were divided into two separate groups - Hicksite and Orthodox. They met in separate meeting houses and sent their children to different schools. Thus Westtown and Haverford were the appropriate schools for Orthodox families. Hutton was equally successful in designing for either party. As he asked in a letter to his sister Mary in 1892 "Is it not singular that I, an Orthodox, should be the architect of two important Hicksite schools, Swarthmore and George School."<sup>13</sup>

Hutton's diaries for the eighteen-eighties record constant visits to Westtown School, where he both visited his daughter Polly and kept a close eye on building activities. The Roberts family, the Leeds family, and the Lippincott family were all associated with Westtown, and that may explain how Hutton came to work in Atlantic City. Surprisingly, there are few hotels in Elizabeth Biddle Yarnall's list of his principal architectural commissions. In 1886 he designed Todd's Hotel on the northwest corner of thirty-sixth street and Broadway in New York City and in 1895 he designed a new west wing for the Aldine Hotel on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia. The only other hotel work listed is in Atlantic City. In 1893, he spent a week at the Hotel Dennis with his wife and daughter. It was in that year, according to Mrs. Yarnall's chronology, that he prepared plans for the expansion of Haddon Hall. A letter in the Quaker Collection of Haverford College shows that he was back in Atlantic City in 1896, this time staying at Haddon Hall. He writes that even though May is said to be an off month, the hotel has two hundred and sixty guests. Another letter written on a subsequent visit records that "We had our first promenade on the forty foot wide ocean walk, which is certainly a sight to see, especially when thousands of people are in motion upon it."<sup>13</sup> It is tempting to think that Hutton was responsible for what the advertisement in The Public Ledger called the "extensively altered and greatly enlarged" Chalfonte of 1900, but there is no direct evidence to support this. It is certain that he was responsible for the design of the new, 1904 Chalfonte.

The progress of the Chalfonte, from the first rumors to the final bidding for the contract, can be traced in The Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builder's Guide. The April 8, 1903 issue mentions rumors of a planned seven story, brick hotel. The issue of May 27, 1903 is more precise:

In Atlantic City, it is said that one of the large beach front hotels will be demolished in the fall and a large hotel to cost \$1,000,000 erected on the site, which is thought to be between South Carolina and Virginia Avenues.

In the issue of July 22, the architect is named for the first time:

Addison Hutton, architect, Stephen Girard Building has been commissioned by Messrs. Leeds & Co. proprietors of the Hotel Chalfont [sic], situated at North Carolina Avenue and the Boardwalk, Atlantic City, N.J., to prepare plans for a six story brick addition to the present hotel. Plans will be ready for bids in about six weeks. Further details later.

It is difficult to know whether the reference to a planned six stories was an error or whether Hutton and Leeds decided to increase the height of their structure. On September 9, the further details appeared:

At Atlantic City the Leeds Hotel company has been founded with a capital of \$600,000. The company has bought the Chalfonte property at North Carolina Avenue and the boardwalk and the property of David and Joseph H. Roberts adjoining, fronting ninety feet on the boardwalk and extending a depth of two hundred feet. A handsome modern hotel is to be erected on the site.

On October 28, 1903, Builder's Guide reported that the project was up for bids:

Addison Hutton architect, Stephen Girard Building, has completed plans and specifications for the ten-story fireproof hotel to be erected on the Hotel Chalfonte grounds, at Atlantic City, N.J., for the Leeds Co. (details previously noted). Chas. Gilpin, the Wells Bros. Co., Stacey Reeves & Son, J.E. & A.L. Pennock, Cramp & Co., Doyle & Doak, and Daniel T. Knauer, of Atlantic City, are bidding. Bids due November 3rd.

The contract was awarded to The Wells Bros. of Chicago. The contract was signed on December 7, the ground was broken on December 9, and the hotel was scheduled to open in time for the weekend of July 4, 1904.

The construction of the hotel must have resembled the homestretch of a horse race. The process is well documented in a series of construction photos which are included in the photographic documentation of this survey. One (photocopy #43), dated February 1, 1904, shows the ground in front of the wood frame building cleared, the pilings driven, and the shears for lifting the iron girders in place.

Another (photocopy #45), dated February 6, shows the steel frame structure beginning to rise and it also shows the wood frame structure being raised on rollers so that it can be moved back from its position nearly flush with North Carolina Avenue.

By February 26, (photocopy #47), the iron frame has reached the eighth story and the bricks for cladding are piled on the lot.

By March 12, (photocopy #52), much of the cladding is up and the old Chalfonte is ready to be moved.

An undated photograph (photocopy #63), shows the E building being reclad and enlarged.

This rapid progress was achieved in spite of certain amount of labor trouble. On April 22, the Atlantic City Daily Press reported that a jurisdictional dispute between two unions had interrupted "the work of rushing up this mammoth building." There was certainly ample overtime especially as the July 4, weekend neared. The Daily Press reported:

No time is being lost by the Chalfonte owners in getting their house finished, furnished, and ready to open. They have a large force of men working both day and night and as soon as one portion of the building is completed there is someone ready to clean it and as soon as it is cleaned, someone else comes along ready to furnish it.

The house is being lighted at night and everywhere one can see the forms of the busy workmen flitting back and forth in their efforts to get the hostelry completed and ready to open to the public.

On July 2, the Chalfonte opened. Not only was it ready to honor July 4th reservations but it served as a dramatic symbol of progress for Atlantic City's Golden Jubilee celebration. The Leeds Company celebrated their achievement with a souvenir booklet which showed before and after photos and a very dramatic picture of construction workers putting the highest iron girders in place (photocopy #64).

At least two features of Addison Hutton's design need to be accounted for. One is its dignity. It is easy to see that this restrained brick, with splayed stone lintels and raised keystones, would have been appropriate to the same architect's building for the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, but it doesn't seem so immediately appropriate to Atlantic City. It contrasts both with the brash gaiety of the wood framed hotels and the sophisticated exotocism of William Price's soon-to-be built Blenheim Hotel. The other odd feature is that although the building has a U shape with an unusually broad footage facing the ocean, there is no grand entrance in the well of the U where the spectator would expect it. In fact, there is no entrance there at all. The simplest explanation for both of these features is that both Leeds and Hutton must have been eager to draw a clear distinction between their prestige hotel and the raucous atmosphere of the boardwalk. The boardwalk may have caused the hotel to be built in the first place, but the elite hotel wanted to keep the democratic boardwalk at arm's length. This could best be done by stretching a row of profitable shops across the front of the hotel and by restricting access to a route through the pavilion along North Carolina Avenue. The obvious monumentality of the Chalfonte would similarly be appropriate to a hotel that was on the boardwalk but not of it.

The July 2, 1904 edition of The Atlantic City Daily Press describes the hotel as it would have appeared in its first season. On the ground floor the guest would have found a smoking room, an amusement room, a barber shop, and a children's playroom. On the floor above was a large parlor facing the boardwalk and ocean, an exchange (carpeted with green velvet and enhanced with columns of Sienna marble), a dining room (85 feet by 140 feet), and pantries and kitchens. The chamber



floors were arranged so that all the bedrooms were en suite. There were only three back bedrooms on a floor. The others faced the ocean in one direction or another. The upper floors were reached by plunger elevators. There was a baggage elevator at the back of the building and a baggage room on each floor. On the tenth floor was a library, an art gallery, a roof-porch, and a sun deck that afforded a view of more than twenty miles seaward. The planning of the tenth floor, however, must be put down to good intentions. It was converted to rentable chambers at a very early point in the new hotel's history.

The rooms must have been the finest then available in Atlantic City. They were furnished with mahogany and there were light and dark curtains. The beds, as the Daily Press put it on July 2, were "in the style known as twin beds." The lighting was sufficiently remarkable that it had merited an earlier story on May 13:

One of the pretty innovations at the new Chalfonte Hotel, foot of North Carolina Avenue, will be the manner in which the electric lights will be arranged in the bed rooms. Instead of having a jet, or light, alongside of each bureau, as is the custom, there are to be two electric lights attached to and fixed on each bureau. The lights will be so arranged that the bureau can be moved to any part of the room and the lights will follow, by simply removing a plug. The scheme is one which will prove highly popular, it is believed, with the fair sex, who usually twist the glass around many ways to see if their hats are on straight.

The electric light fixtures were of bronze. There were long distance phones in all the rooms. The bathrooms featured tiled floors, marble wainscoting, and hot and cold water, both fresh and salt. Each bathroom also featured "an electrical contrivance which," according to the Daily Press of July 2, 1904, "will appeal strongly to the women patrons of the house. It is a device for heating curling irons by electricity, and does away with the possibility of fires by alcohol lamps or gas."

When Leeds advertised that his new hotel was fireproof, he meant more than simply that it was built of iron, brick, and stone. In case a local fire should break out anywhere in the hotel, there were carefully thought out procedures for escape. A fire escape on the ocean side of the building permitted guests to step outside and go down one story only before stepping inside again:

This is done so that people cannot, if they should be obliged to resort to that means of getting out in event of a fire, fall any great distance. They could, for instance, if a fire started on the fifth floor, and it was so smoky that they could not make their way through to the fire escapes at the back of the building, go down the short escape to the floor below, and go through the hall to the fire escape or down the main stairway.

The fire escape at the back of the hotel was said to be the only one of its kind in the area:

It is a shaft built from the bottom to the top of the house, and while in the building proper yet has no communication from the interior and can be reached only from the balconies. It is enclosed in a solid wall, into which there is no possibility for flames to enter. One can go through the hall on any floor to the balcony, turn in the door of the fire escape well, and walk down the steps with as much safety as though he were in his private residence under the most auspicious circumstances. It is cut off from everything except the balcony, and there is not the least thing inside it that will burn.

Twenty thousand gallons of water kept in a tank on the roof could supply the sprinklers.

The most obvious determinant on the fortunes of the Chalfonte during the twentieth century was its relation with Haddon Hall across North Carolina Avenue. Throughout the first two decades of the century the Chalfonte dominated its neighbor and held its own in the competition with the giant hotels that were soon built on the Boardwalk. In the nineteen-twenties, however, Haddon Hall underwent a major expansion. In 1920 its boardwalk arcade opened and two years later its eleven story boardwalk wing opened. This was followed by the eleven story Mansion Avenue wing in 1925 and in 1929 Haddon Hall was completed. In its new form it inevitably dwarfed its neighbor. Increasingly, the Chalfonte became the place to put overflow guests. Moreover, physical additions to the Chalfonte lot were determined by the total needs of the Chalfonte-Haddon Hall complex. These additions included the boardwalk arcade, the garage, and the power house.

It is characteristic of the Leeds and Lippincott concern with continuity that all three members of the firm of Rankin, Kellog, and Crane had worked in Addison Hutton's office as young men. Since they were responsible for Haddon Hall as well, they naturally thought in terms of unifying the two hotels. Thus their Boardwalk Arcade of 1925, with its domes of Guastavino tile, reproduces the 1920 Haddon Hall Arcade and gives visual unity to the complex. It also increased the Chalfonte's ability to absorb large conventions by providing a music room that could seat 450 persons and it upgraded the hotel's image with a notable work of sculpture—the Penquin Group by Albert Laessle of Philadelphia.

The power house was built in stages. In 1915 Rankin, Kellog, & Crane were called in to examine the Chalfonte with an eye to future needs. They surveyed the building, created new floor plans, and rearranged the plumbing. They also extended the original boiler house. This structure appears to have been built in three sections: an original portion probably dating from the eighteen-nineties, a second portion with a date stone bearing the date 1901, and a third portion completed in 1916. Then in 1924 Rankin, Kellog, and Crane designed a new two bay boiler plant which opened in 1926. The old power house thereafter housed a variety of services: a maintenance shop was installed on the first floor, wine and whiskey was stored on the second, and a carpenters' shop was placed on the third. In 1928 three more bays were added to the original two.

The parking garage dates from 1929. The Atlantic City Daily Press reported on March 14, 1904, shortly before the new Chalfonte opened, that the roads into Atlantic City were so bad that automobiles were in effect shut out of the island and that a magazine called The Horseless Age was warning its readers to take their vacations elsewhere. Some residents thought this was fine and urged that automobiles be banned altogether. Hotel keepers, on the other hand, were dismayed by the thought that anyone who could afford a horseless carriage might not choose to drive it to Asbury and under the leadership of George T. Lippincott they sought voluntary donations for the repair of the old meadow turnpike. It must have soon become clear that Atlantic City would be as dependent on the automobile in the twentieth century as it had been on the railroad in the nineteenth. The new garage serving both the Chalfonte and the just completed Haddon Hall was designed to be the most up-to-date in the area. Built for more than \$400,000 by the Turner Construction Co., it was operated by the d'Humy motoramp design. This system, then remarkable but now so familiar, allowed the driver to proceed directly to his parking spot by driving up a series of alternating floor and mezzanine levels. The ramps were built at a fifteen per cent grade and they could be easily negotiated in second gear.

Haddon Hall and the parking garage were both completed in 1929 and this was, of course, an ominous year. Even worse, so far as the fortunes of the Chalfonte-Haddon Hall complex were concerned, there was a distinct shift in the fortunes of Atlantic City over the ensuing decades. As Charles Funnell analyzes the situation in his By The Beautiful Sea, Atlantic City maintained its hold on a lower middle class clientele and lost its appeal to the upper middle class. This, of course, damaged the great hotels severely. During the war, both the Chalfonte and Haddon Hall, as well as several other Atlantic City hotels were pressed into military service and used as part of the vast England General Hospital. After the war they faced severe competition from the motels that seemed to spring up everywhere in and around Atlantic City. In 1955 an attempt to evaluate the properties for real estate purposes reported that there had been no return of any kind to equity owners in more than twenty-five years. All earnings had been devoted to operating expenses and the reduction of funded debt.

Recently, Atlantic City has attempted to revive its fortunes by legalizing casino gambling. It does not, however, permit casinos to exist alone. There has to be enough hotel rooms at each establishment to support a convention business as well as gambling. This would make it difficult to adapt the old hotels to the new use even if their new owners were interested in preservation. Haddon Hall, with its vast room capacity, was able to make the transition. The smaller Chalfonte was not. It was demolished in 1980.

Notes

1

The most recent history of Atlantic City is Charles E. Funnell's By The Beautiful Sea (New York: Knopf, 1975).

2

Information on the early hotels of Atlantic City, compiled by Raymong Ziegler for the New Jersey Writer's Project (Univ. of Pa.), is available in the Hotel's file at the Heston collection of the Atlantic City Public Library.

3

Available in the Quaker Collection at Haverford College.

4

Charles Dudley Warner, "Their Pilgrimage," Harper's New Monthly Magazine, LXXII (April 1886), pp. 675-76.

5

Warner, p. 671.

6

Warner, pp. 677-78.

7

Warner p. 680.

8

James F. Downey, "A Queen of the Coast," Demorest's Family Magazine, August 1895 [no page numbers].

9

Anon, "A New Atlantis," Lippincott's Magazine, June 1873, p. 615.

10

Frank Butler, The Book of the Boardwalk (Atlantic City: The 1954 Association, Inc., 1953), p. 31.

11

Ziegler, p. 6.

12

Elizabeth Biddle Yarnall, Addison Hutton's Quaker Architect (Philadelphia: The Art Alliance Press, 1974).

13

These letters are among the Hutton papers in the Quaker Library at Haverford College.

## CHAINS OF TITLE

The properties that eventually make up the Chalfonte complex descend in two chains of title.

### CHAIN #1:

This chain covers the land on North Carolina Avenue and on Chalfonte Avenue. All of the land covered here passed through the hands of Elisha Roberts. Either he bought it from John DaCosta in 1868 or he acquired it from the Riparian Commissioners in 1879. As he moved the Chalfonte forward, he sold off the land he left behind. Later, when the Chalfonte complex was enlarged, many of these properties were re-purchased by Leeds and Lippincott.

All deeds are in the courthouse of the County of Atlantic in Mays Landing, New Jersey.

- 1853 Deed February 10, 1853  
Book G page 994  
Enoch Doughty  
Jonathan Pitney  
to  
Isaac Waterman
- 1853 Deed February 10, 1853  
Book H page 219  
Millicent Leeds  
to  
Isaac Waterman  
The Camden and Atlantic Land Co.
- 1854 Deed September 28, 1854  
Book H page 234  
Isaac Waterman  
to  
The Camden and Atlantic Land Co.
- 1856 Deed June 28, 1856  
Book I page 499  
The Camden and Atlantic Land Co.  
to  
John DaCosta
- 1868 Deed January 30, 1868  
Book 34 page 81  
John DaCosta  
to Elisha Roberts

- 1879 Deed November 15, 1879  
Book 73 page 532  
State of New Jersey by Riparian Commissioners  
to  
Elisha Roberts
- 1889 Deed April 3, 1889  
Book 130 page 456  
Elisha Roberts  
to  
John L. Young
- 1889 Deed April 9, 1889  
Book 130 page 458  
John L. Young  
to  
John W. Cuthbert
- 1889 Deed May 29, 1889  
Book 143 page 235  
John L. Young  
to  
Charles H. Tage
- 1890 Deed and Agreement January 2, 1890  
Book 173 page 1  
Elisha Roberts  
to  
Atlantic City  
(Agrees to give up a sixty foot strip of land for a  
boardwalk)
- 1891 Deed November 30, 1891  
Book 166 page 423  
John Young  
to  
John Cuthbert
- 1894 Deed November 2, 1894  
Book 186 page 177  
Elisha Roberts  
to  
David Roberts  
Joseph Roberts
- 1895 Deed April 5, 1895  
Book 189 page 496  
David Roberts  
Joseph Roberts  
to  
John Young

- 1895 Deed April 1, 1895  
Book 189 page 465  
David Roberts  
Joseph Roberts  
to Angeline Nassano
- 1896 Deed April 30, 1896  
Book 206 page 22  
David Roberts  
James Roberts  
to  
Atlantic City  
(Agrees to right of way of a sixty-foot wide strip for a  
boardwalk)
- 1897 Deed July 6, 1897  
Book 214 page 260  
David Roberts  
Joseph Roberts  
to  
Charles K. Smith
- 1898 Deed March 15, 1898  
Book 219 page 422  
Angeline Nassano  
to  
Annie Cuthbert
- 1898 Deed February 1, 1898  
Book 218 page 199  
David Roberts  
Joseph Roberts  
to  
Edward Leeds  
Walter Buzby
- 1899 Deed March 18, 1899  
Book 230 page 308  
Edward Leeds  
to  
Newlin Haines
- 1899 Deed October 2, 1899  
Book 237 page 122  
Charles H. Tage  
to  
Rose Campi

- 1900 Deed September 28, 1900  
Book 249 page 452  
Rosa Campi  
to  
Oora Scull
- 1900 Deed September 28, 1900  
Book 250 page 115  
Oora Scull  
to Michael Campi
- 1900 Deed February 20, 1900  
Book 242 page 277  
Walter J. Buzby  
to  
Newlin Haines  
Edward Leeds  
Henry Leeds
- 1903 Deed August 26, 1903  
Book 293 page 25  
Leeds & Haines Co.  
to  
The Leeds Co.
- 1903 Deed August 29, 1903  
Book 291 page 255  
David Roberts  
Joseph Robert-  
to  
The Leeds Company
- 1904 Deed January 14, 1904  
Book 296 page 399  
Annie V. Cuthbert  
John W. Cuthbert  
to  
Henry W. Leeds
- 1910 Deed December 7, 1910  
Book 444 page 388  
Henry W. Leeds  
to  
The Leeds Company
- 1911 Deed May 19, 1911  
Book 461 page 18  
John L. Young  
to  
Harry Best



- 1911 Deed June 20, 1911  
Book 461 page 191  
John W. Cuthbert  
to  
William S. Cuthbert
- 1911 Deed September 18, 1911  
Book 467 page 93  
John W. Cuthbert  
to  
The Leeds Company
- 1912 Deed February 3, 1912  
Book 475 page 379  
Margaret Ketland  
to  
J. Pratt Cramer
- 1916 Deed October 30, 1916  
Book 563 page 310  
Mary J. Scherer  
to  
Harry Best
- 1918 Deed May 16, 1918  
Book 591 page 95  
Charles K. Smith, Jr.  
to  
The Leeds Company
- 1919 Deed January 2, 1919  
Book 596 page 488  
J. Pratt Cramer  
to  
Xavier Wittmer
- 1922 Deed September 8, 1922  
Book 690 page 141  
Ida Wittmer, widow  
to  
Albertie Wigginton
- 1922 Deed November 1, 1922  
Book 695 page 92  
Albertie Wigginton  
to  
Max Kornfield

- 1922 Deed November 1, 1922  
Book 695 page 95  
Max Kornfield  
to  
Jennie F. Robertson
- 1923 Deed May 16, 1923  
Book page  
Nathan L. Osder  
to  
Nellie A. Archer
- 1923 Deed May 17, 1923  
Book 712 page 190  
Nellie A. Archer  
to  
Nellie A. Archer  
Irene A. Archer
- 1924 Deed October 29, 1924  
Book 753 page 461  
Jennie Robertson  
to  
John S. Wescott
- 1924 Deed January 21, 1924  
Book 743 page 135  
Anthony A. Malatesta  
to  
The Leeds and Lippincott Co.
- 1924 Deed November 1, 1924  
Book 756 page 123  
Jennie F. Robertson  
to  
Albertie Wigginton
- 1924 Deed November 1, 1927  
R.G.E. Development Co.  
(subject to mortgage to  
Albertie Wigginton)  
to  
Anthony P. Valentine, Jr.
- 1925 Deed March 6, 1925  
Book 763 page 557  
Harry Best  
to  
Leeds and Lippincott

- 1925 Deed March 6, 1925  
Book 763 page 557  
Harry Best  
to  
Albertie Wigginton
- 1926 Deed February 26, 1926  
Book 824 page 38  
Albertie Wigginton  
to  
Claribel Toboldt
- 1926 Deed September 22, 1926  
Book 844 page 240  
Clairibel Toboldt  
to  
Walter W. Clark
- 1926 Deed September 22, 1926  
Book 844 page 242  
Walter W. Clark  
to  
Leeds and Lippincott
- 1927 Deed March 24, 1927  
Book 862 page 178  
Anthony P. Valentine, Jr.  
to  
Ephraim Tomlinson
- 1927 Deed April 12, 1927  
Book 866 page 101  
Ephraim Tomlinson  
to  
Leeds and Lippincott
- 1928 Deed January 16, 1928  
Book page  
Albertie Wigginton  
to  
Leeds and Lippincott
- 1928 Deed December 20, 1928  
Book 911 page 92  
William S. Cuthbert  
to  
Leeds and Lippincott
- 1938 Deed May 18, 1938  
Book 1077 page 213  
Henry W. Leeds et. al., Trustees  
under the Bankruptcy Act of Leeds & Lippincott Co.  
to  
Leeds & Lippincott Co.

- 1956 Deed September 28, 1956  
Book 1838 page 349  
Leeds and Lippincott Co.  
to  
The Prudential Insurance Co.
- 1979 Deed September 21, 1979  
Book 3397 page 149  
The Prudential Insurance Co.  
to  
Resorts International Hotel, Inc.
- 1979 Deed September 21, 1979  
Book 3397 page 153  
Resorts International Hotel, Inc.  
to  
Harrah's-Holiday Inns of New Jersey, Inc.

CHAIN #2:

These properties lay along South Carolina Avenue and included such hotels as the Warwick, the Cedarcroft, the Rydal, the Keystone, and the New England. These properties were originally part of a thirty-three acre tract acquired by Patrick O'Reilly from the estate of Henry F. Felix.

- 1869 Deed October 16, 1869  
Book 37 page 176  
Henry F. Felix  
to  
Patrick O'Reilly
- 1870 Deed November 5, 1870  
Book 39 page 548  
Patrick O'Reilly  
to  
Silas Morse
- 1881 Deed January 28, 1881  
Book 82, page 583  
Silas Morse  
to  
Sarah Marbacher
- 1887 Deed December 9, 1887  
Book 133 page 206  
Sarah Marbacher  
to  
Jennie Ambruster

- 1891 Deed October 30, 1891  
Book 157 page 376  
Jennie Armbruster  
to  
J. Henry Bartlett
- 1891 Deed December 31, 1891  
Book 161 page 13  
J. Henry Bartlett  
Charles E. Bartlett  
to  
Mary N. Grant
- 1895 Deed November 12, 1895  
Book 197 page 276  
Silas R. Morse  
to  
Mary B. Lever
- 1898 Deed October 8, 1898  
Book 225 page 465  
Albert Saunders  
to  
Joseph Lingerman
- 1899 Deed September 18, 1899  
Book 236 page 74  
Mary B. Lever  
to  
Howard W. Burk
- 1901 Deed October 10, 1901  
Book 263 page 491  
Smith E. Johnson, Sheriff  
to  
Francis P. Quigely
- 1901 Deed October 28, 1901  
Book 264 page 479  
Howard W. Burk  
to  
Samuel P. Bartlett  
Charles A. Bartlett
- 1901 Deed November 30, 1901  
Book 266 page 224  
Joseph E. Lingeman  
to  
Lillian Dennis

- 1902 Deed June 3, 1902  
Book 273 page 193  
Smith E. Johnson, Sheriff  
to  
John Myers
- 1905 Deed May 18, 1905  
Book 320 page 229  
Lillian Dennis  
to  
Abbie Palmer
- 1906 Deed April 2, 1906  
Book 336 page 340  
Daniel Myers  
to  
The Leeds Company
- 1906 Deed April 6, 1906  
Book 336 page 443  
Francis P. Quigley  
to  
The Leeds Company
- 1906 Deed April 7, 1906  
Book 336 page 377  
Samuel P. Bartlett  
to  
Sarah W. Leeds
- 1915 Deed May 10, 1915  
Book 541 page 237  
Sarah W. Leeds  
to  
The Leeds Co.
- 1918 Deed October 8, 1918  
Book 593 page 419  
Florence Mason  
to  
Rynear Williams
- 1919 Deed December 15, 1919  
Book 620 page 240  
Rynear Williams  
to  
Bernard Pellicoff
- 1921 Deed September 26, 1921  
Book 662 page 173  
Abbie J. Palmer  
to  
Kathryn McBride

- 1921 Deed January 3, 1921  
Book 644 page 338  
Bernard Pellicoff  
to  
Charles W. Stitzer  
Clarence R. Stitzer
- 1923 Deed March 20, 1923  
Book 700 page 303  
Bennetta Thacher, widow  
to  
Charles W. Stitzer  
Clarence R. Stitzer
- 1927 Deed January 10, 1927  
Book 859 page 101  
Clarence R. Stitzer  
to  
Leeds & Lippincott
- 1928 Deed May 9, 1928  
Book 896 page 285  
Kathryn McBride  
to  
Leeds & Lippincott
- 1938 Deed May 18, 1938  
Book 1077 page 213  
Henry W. Leeds et. al., Trustees  
under the Bankruptcy Act of Leeds & Lippincott Co.  
to  
Leeds & Lippincott Co.
- 1956 Deed September 28, 1956  
Book 1B3B page 349  
Leeds and Lippincott Co.  
to  
The Prudential Insurance Co.
- 1979 Deed September 21, 1979  
Book 3397 page 149  
The Prudential Insurance Co.  
to  
Resorts International Hotel, Inc.
- 1979 Deed September 21, 1979  
Book 3397 page 153  
Resorts International Hotel, Inc.  
to  
Harrah's-Holiday Inns of New Jersey, Inc.

PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation on the Chalfonte Hotel was produced by the firm of McCauley Sperr Architects of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, under contract to Harrah's/Holiday Inns of Memphis, Tennessee, owners of the Chalfonte. The owners plan to demolish the complex, which has been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, to make way for a new casino hotel. The configuration, age, and condition of the historic Chalfonte buildings preclude their rehabilitation and reuse as a casino hotel under New Jersey Casino Control Commission Regulations. This mitigative documentation partially complies with the New Jersey Coastal Area Facilities Review Act.

The recording team consisted of Hugh J. McCauley, AIA, Chief Architect; Otto Sperr, AIA, Architect; Thomas Ewing, Chief Draftsman; Richard Tatara, Survey Draftsman; John McCauley, Surveyor; Michael Brooks, Historian and Photographer; and Bernie Cleff, Photographer. HABS Project Coordinator was John A. Burns, AIA. The records were prepared for transmittal to the Library of Congress by HABS Historian Robie S. Lange (1980) and HABS Architect John A. Burns, AIA (1982).